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FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2910  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
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UNCLAS CONAKRY 000510

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [GV](#)  
SUBJECT: INCREASE IN CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN CONAKRY

REF: CONAKRY 0480

¶1. (U) Over the past few days, there has been a noticeable increase in the frequency of civil disturbances in Conakry. After the youth demonstration in neighboring Kamsar on August 22 (located a few hours up the coast from Conakry) that resulted in three civilians being shot by security forces (reftel), there have been several spontaneous demonstrations in the capital. Demonstrations temporarily shut down key traffic routes on September 8 and 9 as youths gathered to protest the continued lack of electricity. Usually dispersing within an hour of starting, these sporadic protests are generally seen as minor disruptions.

¶2. (U) Although the police have been able to peacefully control the crowds, there have been incidents of tire burnings and rock throwing. Around 17:00 on September 8, youths throwing rocks attacked and destroyed a taxi because the driver refused to yield to the demonstrators. There were no injuries reported and the police were able to disperse the crowd without using tear gas or firearms.

¶3. (SBU) There were reports of shots fired in the early morning hours of September 9, which were believed to be related to an alleged theft of a sport utility vehicle from a downtown club by three police officers. In response to the crime, a number of gendarmes set up a road block at the Castro Bridge (which controls access to the downtown area) for several hours.

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COMMENT  
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¶4. (SBU) Conakry witnessed a similar increase in protest activity during the same timeframe last year, which seemed to coincide both with the rainy season coming to an end and the beginning of Ramadan. The heavy rains over the summer months usually deter most protesters. Meanwhile, prices for foodstuffs tend to skyrocket during Ramadan, causing economic pressures to increase. The students, who are usually the first to head out into the streets when frustrations mount, do not return to school until November, which means that they have time on their hands. END COMMENT.  
BROKENSHIRE